

**Statement of Father JohnENZler,
Executive Director of Catholic Charities
September 6, 2013**

“As a priest who drives a lot in this area, I’m affected by lots of people who come to me and say ‘Can you help me out?’ and I must say with a collar on, it’s hard to say no.

“But I said ‘yes’ to George, to Ike because I believe this is the right approach.

“The County gives us, the Catholic Charities, and all of us here so much support when we try to do together. There’s a public/private partnership between all of us and the County says ‘How can we help you, Catholic Charities, provide services?’

“The reality is that we know for a fact that when we get people to come to our shelters, come to our place of service that they’re helped holistically. They’re helped with food. They’re helped with abuse issues. They’re helped with homelessness. They’re helped in all kinds of ways and the reality is at a street corner even myself, as a priest, never knows for sure if this money is going to go the right place or is going to a place where people aren’t going to be helped at all. I call this a bandage. You put a bandage on somebody’s cut on a street corner doesn’t solve the problem.

“Come to a shelter, come to one of our service centers, the coalition of those who are here, and they can be helped and healed and find real service.

“So I, as Catholic Charities, we as Catholic services, support this effort wholeheartedly. It will be hard to say no but I want to make sure I say to people we have services and a place to go. Need some help? We have it here in the county. Take advantage of it. Not just a bandage, real service. Let’s do that together.

“Thanks to all for a chance to support this effort. We will do our best to make sure that that panhandlers can get what they need if they really need service. And those that don’t need services will stop asking for help at our corners.

“Thank you so much.”